

**Approval Requested**☒ **Final**☐ **Preliminary****Application for projects over \$500****Organization Name:** WEST YELLOWSTONE MONTANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**Project Name:** Opportunity: WEST YELLOWSTONE/HEBGEN LAKE ICE FISHING  
TOURNAMENT**Application Completed by:** JAN STODDARD

**Please explain the need for this project as well as a clear overview of the concept of the project. Narrative must provide enough details that those reviewing the application can comprehend or visualize the full scope of the project. Narrative should be a full overview, yet explicit and to the point.**

The purpose of this project is to establish a **new regional/national event**, a competitive ice fishing tournament, in the West Yellowstone/Hebgen Lake area in early winter (February 3-5, 2012), which would grow to bring hundreds of people to town for the weekend of the event, and additional visitors throughout the year as they come to fish the lake to prepare for the tournament. The event will include ice fishing seminars and instruction for adults and for kids, which will teach more people about a winter sport they can do on the underutilized water resource in our area (Hebgen Lake).

It would also establish West Yellowstone as a new, prime location for ice fishing and winter fishing in western United States building on the diversity of winter offerings for individuals and families. The timing—the first weekend in February—would also fill a void of other winter activities or events, bringing in ice fishing competitors, their families and friends at a time when West Yellowstone needs it.

The plan is to engage the NAIFC (North American Ice Fishing Circuit) to administer this national tournament using its established procedures, which gives visibility and credibility to this new event as a national competitive event. The NAIFC will provide national promotion/marketing, media coverage on its television show, seminars by expert ice fishermen during the event, a kid's workshop and fishing event and will lead administration of the event itself. NAIFC has a proven process for making these events successful. NAIFC has been seeking a western/.Rocky Mountain tournament destination and is excited to promote a new location to a nationwide audience.

Prior to the event, they manage specific timelines, task lists, administration, and tracking of progress, along with national advertising and publicity. On-site during the event, they manage the seminars and programs, logistics, and tournament, as well as television and media coverage during the event, at a cost that is considerably less than hiring an event coordinator and support staff. This allows more time for our local committee to focus on regional and local efforts and coordination with locally to maximize the event.

A local committee of West Yellowstone and Hebgen Lake community leaders will manage fundraising, local/regional marketing and promotion, community opportunities associated with the event and volunteer workers to work with NAIFC on the event. The local committee (WY/Hebgen Lake Ice Fishing Tournament Committee) will take responsibility for monitoring and supervising the project.

The tournament and family Ice Camp will take place on Hebgen Lake. The Friday night seminars and dining options will be based in various West Yellowstone locations

preferably within walking distance to encourage foot traffic throughout town. A Saturday evening S'mores event (in conjunction with the Kids'N'Snow weekend) and live bands will also encourage families and participants to base from West Yellowstone.

The NAIFC film crew is not just here to film the tournament, but also here to obtain footage about the community. The producers work closely with each community to profile the activities, attractions, and amenities that we want to profile.

NAIFC Tournaments are ice fishing's equivalent to big time bass and walleye tournaments. Beginning in January and continuing through March: six (6) to eight (8) Qualifying Tournaments are run throughout North America. From those Qualifying Tournaments, 75 two-person teams are invited to the NAIFC Tournament Series Championship held in December. The NAIFC is the only Ice Fishing Series that crowns a National/North American Champion. NAIFC has extensive experience in putting on these events. NAIFC provides schedules, checklists, best practices and support through the planning process and is here to run the actual event.

NAIFC Qualifying Tournaments are 3-day events: Two-thirds education and one-third competition with a maximum entry of 150 two-person teams. For those three days, the Host Community becomes the center of Ice Fishing: Friday-Saturday provides the Host Community with tremendous Education opportunities, while Sunday provides a media outlet to promote World Class Competition and showcase the amenities the Host Community has to offer.

On the Friday Night of Tournament Week a seminar is held, free of charge and open to anyone. Each seminar features a recognized, industry-leading speaker, demonstrating the latest techniques and equipment. That presentation is followed by a round-table discussion with NAIFC Pro-Staffers focusing on specific techniques on how to catch fish on the Host Community's tournament lake. On the morning following the seminar, participants are invited to attend an on-ice tutorial held on the tournament lake, guided by NAIFC Pro-staffers.

Ice Camp, held on Saturday morning, is a popular industry-leading youth education program that is open to the public, and free of charge. Ice Camp events are advertised in area schools, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, Community Education programs and Recreation Districts. Ice Camp consists of in-class and on-ice fishing tutorials delivered by experienced, DNR certified NAIFC Pro-Staff instructors. In addition to demonstrations of the latest techniques and sponsor provided equipment, the curriculum promotes safety, conservation and environmental stewardship. Sponsors provide equipment and prizes for the activity, and kids who sign up and participate receive complimentary ice rods and tackle (HT Enterprises supplied over 1,100 "free" rods to kids in 2010).

Although Ice Camp is geared toward kids, all family members are encouraged to attend regardless of age. Introduction to the newest technology coupled with professional guidance gives both the parent and child a memorable ice fishing experience. The Host Community is again seen as standing out in front bringing an outstanding education experience to the town, while providing yet another venue to garner media attention.

### **Objectives**

Include the objectives from the narrative portion of your marketing plan that support this project.

1. Maintain the same level of West Yellowstone Resort Tax Collections as the previous year (July 2010 through June 2011).
2. Maintain the same number of lodging nights as the previous year (July 2010 through June 2011) as repeated by the West Yellowstone TBID.
3. Participation with one or both of the local marketing funds in at least three projects.
4. Fifty team participation for the first tournament.

**Refer to the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project.**

- ◆ Attract visitors to West Yellowstone by communicating an image that is consistent with our long-term vision of West Yellowstone as a vacation destination.
- ◆ Continue to target our market as precisely as possible, assuring that our limited funding is spent to reach an audience that not only requests travel information, but also arrives in West Yellowstone and spends significant dollars during the visit.
- ◆ Continue to expand our marketing potential by participating in partnerships with other tourism partners.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

- Goal 1.1: Implement highly targeted consumer advertising/promotion campaigns.
- Goal 1.2: Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
- Goal 1.3: Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

**Detail pages attached** ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

**Budget page must be attached for approval.**

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### **Detail Page**

Putting on a successful event, especially an initial event into a new market requires a very specific yet strategic marketing plan. For this first tournament, we are working closely with NAIFC on national and Midwestern based advertising. We will generate as much publicity as possible leveraging help with any media or business willing to help us.

We are in the process of contacting a number of regional sporting goods retailers for shared ad space within their existing advertising commitments. We will also build “buzz” about the tournament through several unstructured pre-tournament scouting events. A marketing timeline is being developed to include both national NAIFC components (described in the following pages) and our own efforts. We would utilize Opportunity Funds for advertising and marketing through the following media. We would promote the tournament dates and activities as well as the pre-event scouting days.

### **National and Regional Internet Advertising:**

- This would include banner ads and links on specific ice fishing/winter fishing informational websites, ice fishing equipment sponsors, and ice fishing/winter fishing forums/blogs including [www.fishyspot.com](http://www.fishyspot.com), [www.iceshanty.com](http://www.iceshanty.com), [www.cabelas.com](http://www.cabelas.com), [www.outdoorwarehouse.com](http://www.outdoorwarehouse.com), [www.ice-fishing-central.com](http://www.ice-fishing-central.com), [www.troutunderground.com](http://www.troutunderground.com) and possibly one other if we find a very productive Minnesota based blog.
- Targeted Facebook advertising campaigns to specific activity likes in the following states: UT, ID, WY, MT, ND, SD, OR, WA, MN, WI, IA, MI
- Participation and partial funding with other local organizations in a film production by the Ice Man Television series that will cover the tournament and profile West Yellowstone as destination community for ice fishing and winter sports activities. We will be involved in script development, location choices, and final editing.

### **Radio Talk Shows geared to outdoor sports, fishing, and ice fishing and corresponding web links/banner ads including:**

- KSL Outdoors (Salt Lake); UTAH Trailmaster Outdoor Show KALL; Montana Outdoor Radio Show with "Captain" Mark Ward; Backcountry Utah with Brian Brinkerhoff
- Jim Ferguson Outdoor Trails Network (300+ stations)
- Monthly Radio Call-in Promotion (starting in November) : Tim Lesmeister - Minneapolis – Radio Host every Sunday night “KTALK” and mention on his blog “Tracks from the Great Outdoors”

### **Print including:**

- 11 X 17" color posters for distribution at local and regional sporting goods stores, lodging and power sports dealers
- Newsprint in major newspapers in larger population cities in neighboring states including: Pocatello, Driggs, and Idaho Falls, ID; Jackson , WY; Bismarck, ND

**WEST YELLOWSTONE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PROJECT BUDGET**  
**OPPORTUNITY – ICE FISHING TOURNAMENT**

	State Tourism Funds		Other Funds		Total
<b>PROFESSIONALSERVICES:</b>					
Creative for ads, web banners, and posters	\$600.00	+	\$0.00	=	\$600.00
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$600.00</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>		<b>\$600.00</b>
<b>MARKETING/ADVERTISING:</b>					
Media placement including print, radio, and internet advertising	\$2,100	+	\$0	=	\$2,100
Posters	\$300	+	\$0	=	\$300
Ice Men destination film segment	\$1000	+	\$0	=	\$1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3400</b>	+	<b>\$0</b>	=	<b>\$3400</b>
<b>TRAVEL:</b>					
Personal Car	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Commercial Transportation	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Meals	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Lodging	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Vehicle Rental	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	+	<b>\$0</b>		<b>\$0</b>
<b>OTHER:</b>					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>		<b>\$0</b>		<b>\$0</b>
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<b>REGION/CVB PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	+	<b>\$0</b>	=	<b>\$4,000</b>